

reform. Make no mistake about it. The electorate must be able to hear all the views about candidates in a timely manner. And candidates must be able to stomach the full range of opinions regarding their candidacy.

Mr. President, we must clean up the system but without compromising fundamental first amendment rights. I believe this task is difficult but not impossible. Without infringing upon any American's rights, we can ensure that the American people control the direction of their contributions, have an understanding of who gave what to whom, and are confident that our elections are free of foreign influence, which is so important.

Mr. President, the Senate, I believe, should work to enact these measures into law and not infringe on our first amendment rights.

I yield the floor.

Mr. LEVIN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. DOMENICI. I say to the Senator, I wonder if I might take 3 minutes as in morning business. I can go into morning business and do this, and then we can come back to this.

Mr. LEVIN. I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to yield to Senator DOMENICI for up to 5 minutes and then have my rights to the floor restored.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Hearing no objection, without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from New Mexico is recognized.

Mr. DOMENICI. I thank the Senator very, very much. I will be perhaps even briefer than that.

PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO AID IN THE RESTORATION OF THE BASILICA OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, on September 24 and 25, Umbria, Italy, that community, was hit by twin earthquakes. Extensive damage was inflicted upon the towns and villages across the region. Eleven people lost their lives and thousands of homes and buildings have been damaged.

The Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi was one of the buildings that was severely damaged. It isn't just a church or a great center of pilgrimage, or an artistic archive and yet it is all of those things.

It is one of those special places that you visit one day, but long to return to for a lifetime if you are fortunate enough to get to Italy and to set about to see some very, very historic buildings with culture and with religion that just wrecks from the walls.

That is why I was profoundly saddened to learn that the basilica was severely damaged by the earthquakes of September 24 and September 25, and again last week.

It seems so ironic that the basilica, built in honor of the patron Saint of Italy who cherished the natural world, was ravaged by an act of nature.

The basilica is one of the finest examples of Italian Gothic architecture, a building of "unparalleled importance in the evolution of Italian art." It has been written, by those more knowledgeable about art and architecture than I am and will ever be, that "a harmonious relationship exists between the architecture and its fresco decoration." "The strong and simple forms are repeated throughout the building both to unify and to articulate the space with so powerful an effect that the architectural members are echoed in the painted framework to the frescos."

The basilica is a living museum providing a home for the art of several great masters of the 13th and 14th centuries. These art treasures depict scenes from the Old and New Testaments.

The famous fresco artist, Cimabue, began his work in the basilica, believe it or not, in 1277. Cimabue's frescos include scenes from the life of the Virgin, popes, angels, and saints, as well as scenes of the Apocalypse and the Crucifixion.

Cimabue's pupil, Giotto, painted 28 famous, and beautiful frescos based on St. Bonaventure's version of St. Francis' life, and major accomplishments. These famous Giotto frescos painted on the sidewalls of the basilica were cracked by the earthquake but are miraculously somewhat in tact. These frescos are world treasures. So that my colleagues understand, let me make this comparison. Giotto was to the basilica what Brumidi was to our own beautiful Capitol.

Mobilization of Italian artists and restorers has been swift. In addition, the National Museum in London and the Louvre have offered experts to help with the restoration.

The sense-of-the-Senate resolution calls upon the Smithsonian, the National Gallery of Art, and any of the other premier art museums in the United States that have the pertinent expertise to provide technical assistance to aid in the restoration of the Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi and the works of art that have been damaged in the earthquake.

I want to indicate to the Senate I will send to the desk to be considered in wrapup a resolution—just by the Senate; we are not going to try to go to the House—just a sense-of-the-Senate resolution that states the facts regarding this disaster, and merely says that the Smithsonian Institution, the National Gallery of Art and any of the other premier art museums of the United States having pertinent expertise in restoration should provide technical assistance to aid in the restoration of the Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi and the works of art that have been damaged in the earthquake. That is essentially what it is.

BIPARTISAN CAMPAIGN REFORM ACT OF 1997

The Senate continued with consideration of the bill.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I am a co-sponsor and strong supporter of the McCain-Feingold bill, and I want to explain this afternoon in some detail why I support a key section in the bill that is the subject of much debate. It is section 201, the provision that is intended to stop what we call issue ad abuse. By issue ad abuse I mean the mislabeling of candidate ads as issue ads in order to evade contribution limits and the disclosure requirements that now exist in Federal campaign law.

I want to emphasize this point because it has been overlooked, it seems to me, by so many of us during this debate. Current law restricts contributions and the Buckley case has upheld that restriction as being consistent with the first amendment. Section 201 is not only constitutional within Buckley but it is also critically important to campaign finance reform. I want to spend some time explaining why.

Now, Buckley—which I think has been cited by just about everybody who has spoken in this debate—is the touchstone for drafting constitutionally permissible Federal campaign finance laws. So I want to start with Buckley. In Buckley, the Supreme Court upheld a strict set of limits on campaign contributions to Federal candidates, despite impassioned argument, including by the ACLU, that such limits impermissibly restricted first amendment rights of free speech and free association.

This is what the Court said in Buckley, and I will be quoting at some length because it is critical in understanding the permissible limits of campaign finance law and limits:

It is unnecessary to look beyond the Act's primary purpose—to limit the actuality and appearance of corruption resulting from large individual financial contributions—in order to find a constitutionally sufficient justification for the \$1,000 contribution limitation. Under a system of private financing of elections, a candidate lacking immense personal or family wealth must depend on financial contributions from others to provide the resources necessary to conduct a successful campaign. The increasing importance of the communications media and sophisticated mass mailing and polling operations to effective campaigning make the raising of large sums of money an ever more essential ingredient of an effective candidacy. To the extent that large contributions are given to secure political quid pro quo's from current and potential office holders, the integrity of our system of representative democracy is undermined. . . .

Of almost equal concern is the danger of actual quid pro quo arrangements and the impact of the appearance of corruption stemming from public awareness of the opportunities for abuse inherent in a regime of large individual financial contributions. . . .

And the Court went on:

Congress could legitimately conclude that the avoidance of the appearance of improper influence "is also critical. . . if confidence in the system of representative government is not to be eroded to a disastrous extent." . . .